ECA Update:
April 8, 2014

In this update:

DOE 2014 Strategic Plan

Secretary Moniz
April 8, 2014
LINK

Colleagues,

We are pleased to share that the 2014 Strategic Plan is now posted on the Department's web site. This is a comprehensive blueprint to guide the agency's core mission of ensuring America's security and prosperity by addressing its energy, environmental, and nuclear challenges through transformative science and technology solutions.

Following this roadmap, the Department will continue building a cleaner energy environment, strengthening our economy, creating jobs, and fostering innovation in the process. The priorities outlined in this plan are critical to advancing the nation's energy security and providing for a more secure and prosperous country for future generations.

The Plan is organized into 12 strategic objectives, aimed at three distinct goals - Science and Energy, Nuclear Security, and Management and Performance. These objectives represent the broad cross-cutting and collaborative efforts taking place across the Department's headquarters, site offices, and our national laboratories. These include, among other things:

- Advancing the goals of the President's Climate Action Plan by supporting prudent development, deployment, and efficient use of "all of the above" energy resources that also create new jobs and industries;
- Delivering the scientific discoveries and major scientific tools that transform our understanding of nature and strengthen the connection between advances in fundamental science to technology innovation;

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- Maintaining the safety, security, and effectiveness of the nation's nuclear deterrent without nuclear testing; and
- Strengthening key science, technology, and engineering capabilities and modernize the national security infrastructure.

We thank all of you for the hard work and collaborative efforts that went into making this plan reflect the key Administration priorities to address climate change and the Department's core missions. I invite you to read our Strategic Plan at http://www.energy.gov/budget-performance and refer to it often in the future as you develop individual program plans and then move to execute our vital Departmental missions.

Sincerely,

Secretary Moniz and Deputy Secretary Poneman

New website to give Hanford visitors self-guided tour of reactor

Atomic Heritage Foundation
April 7, 2014
LINK

Heritage tourists around the world will now be able to tour the historic B Reactor and learn about life at the Hanford site on a new website, "Ranger in Your Pocket," launched today at RangerInYourPocket.org. The website features dozens of first-hand accounts of working on the top-secret Manhattan Project from solving the mysterious "poisoning" of the B Reactor to enduring the "termination winds."

The Atomic Heritage Foundation has created a powerful new interpretive tool called "Ranger in Your Pocket," based on a BYOD or "Bring Your Own Device" strategy. This technology-based tool represents a fundamental shift in engaging visitors by empowering them to use their personal smartphones or tablets to create their own tour experience.

Congress is currently considering legislation to establish a Manhattan Project National Historical Park with sites at Los Alamos, NM, Oak Ridge, TN and Hanford, WA. Led by a strong bipartisan Manhattan Project delegation, the legislation could be enacted before the end of 2014.

The new park is expected to generate 500,000 or more tourists at these sites over the next decade. In anticipation of the park, officials at the National Park Service have enthusiastically embraced this new technology. Craters of the Moon National Monument and Preserve in central Idaho and Great Falls National Historical Park in Paterson, NJ are in the vanguard of having "BYOD" tours which have been very popular with visitors.

The "Ranger in Your Pocket" website will allow visitors to take self-guided tours of the B Reactor, the world's first full-scale plutonium production reactor. The B Reactor tour takes visitors through each major room in the reactor. Visitors can listen to Manhattan Project scientists and workers explaining how the reactor works and the various components that were essential to its operation.

At the Control Room stop, Leona Woods Marshall describes the fateful start-up of the reactor. "You could see the water getting hot, going through the brown recorders, and hear it rushing in the tubes. You could see the control rods coming out and out and out. And then something happened. There wasn't any reactivity. The reactor was dead, just plain dead! Everybody stood around and stared." Well after midnight, Enrico Fermi drove while they headed back to Richland arguing about what went wrong.

Another stop focuses on General Leslie R. Groves. As his son Richard recalled, his father was "very, very competitive. He played games not to play games, but to win. You didn't want to play a game with him, because you were probably going to lose. If you didn't, he'd come back until he beat you." With extraordinary ambition, savvy and stamina, Groves was the Manhattan Project's "indispensable man," as historian Robert S. Norris explains.

Other selections depict "Life at Hanford." Henry Petcher recalled, "I was in charge of the box lunch department, a 24-hour operation. I had about 370 some odd people, mostly women who were wives of construction workers. At my peak we were making anywhere from 50,000 to 55,000 box lunches a day."

Burt Pierard remembers walking to the Village Theater as a five year old. "The Saturday matinee cost twelve cents for two cartoons, two main features, a newsreel, and a serial, like Superman or Rocket Man. I can remember as a five-year-old walking all the way across town with my dime and two pennies in my pocket."

AHF plans to develop a suite of Manhattan Project tours on the "Ranger in Your Pocket" website. One tour in the works will feature Hanford's prewar history, the T Plant and 300 Area operations, and expand on life at Hanford during the Manhattan Project. Another will focus on Bathtub Row, Fuller Lodge and the former Technical Area in downtown Los Alamos, NM. A third will address the extraordinary scientific and engineering innovations that came out of the Manhattan Project and their legacy for today.

For the B Reactor tour, AHF is very grateful for the support of the City of Richland and the M. J. Murdock Charitable Trust. Thanks, too, to the B Reactor Museum Association for its invaluable contributions as well as the Department of Energy-Richland, Mission Support Alliance, TRIDEC, Hanford Communities, the Hanford Reach Interpretive Center and members of the Hanford History Project. AHF worked with 4Site Interactive Studios to design and develop the "Ranger in Your Pocket" website.

The Atomic Heritage Foundation (AHF) is a nonprofit in Washington, DC, dedicated to the preservation and interpretation of the Manhattan Project and Atomic Age and its legacy. AHF has been working to create a Manhattan Project National Historical Park with a coalition from the Manhattan Project sites and national organizations. AHF works to preserve historic sites and develop educational programming for students, teachers, and the general public. For more information about the Atomic Heritage Foundation, please visit www.atomicheritage.org

Professor explains women's impact during SRS construction

Aiken Standard
March 26, 2014
LINK

Dr. Kari Frederickson - author of "Cold War Dixie" - said she thought she would have to do additional research to examine how women impacted the Aiken community during the construction of the Savannah River Site.

After going back through her studies, she realized that the story was already there; she just had to look at it from a different perspective.

Frederickson is a professor at the University of Alabama and was the guest speaker at the 11th annual Pickens-Salley Symposium on Southern Women on Tuesday night at USC Aiken. Her book examines how the creation of SRS impacted the Aiken community.

During her address to over 100 students, faculty and community members, Frederickson explained that finding women during the Cold War requires people to overcome assumptions.

"We assume that the construction phase was a male-dominated thing," she explained. "But women were here to build country clubs, organize groups, write columns in local newspapers and name their housing divisions to make them feel more like home."

Frederickson said history tends to paint the picture that workers were single men who brought corruption to the town. That is partially true, she said, but there were also a great deal of workers who brought families with them. And the women of those families provided culture and also made a strong push for education.

"They used patriotism to advocate for education. They argued that a government that would build something as spectacular as SRS should also build better schools to support families in the area. Their lobbying secured over $20 million for school control and maintenance," she said.

In addition to Frederickson's address, Vice Chancellor Deidre Martin awarded Gwen Johnson with the Pickens-Salley Southern Woman of Distinction Award. Martin said Johnson received the award for her work in education, as well as her work at SRS.

Johnson reciprocated and said USCA has allowed her great opportunities to fulfill her passion of working with students.

"I have enjoyed my career with USCA and I've been able to do everything I wanted to do for children," she said. I thank USCA for giving me that opportunity to do that."

Long-Term Storage of Cesium and Strontium at the Hanford Site

DOE IG Report
March 26, 2014
LINK

One of the many significant cleanup challenges faced by the Department of Energy (Department) is the ongoing management of stored cesium and strontium capsules at the Hanford Site's Waste Encapsulation and Storage Facility (WESF).

We found that the Richland Operations Office (Richland) has initiated action to begin to address some of the challenges posed by continued storage of cesium and strontium capsules in the WESF. Such action appears prudent in that continued storage of the capsules in WESF is not cost effective and may pose additional risks to the environment associated with beyond design threats at the Hanford Site. While Richland is considering options for dry storage, there are no definitive plans to move the capsules to a safer and more cost effective storage system.

The Department is aware of the current safety conditions associated with the storage of cesium and strontium capsules at WESF and has taken actions to mitigate any risks associated with WESF. Furthermore, we acknowledge the budgetary challenges facing the Department, and its impact on moving the capsules into dry storage. We did not make any formal recommendations; however, we suggested that the Richland Operations Office expeditiously proceed with its plans to pursue a dry storage alternative to support transfer of the capsules out of WESF at the earliest possible timeframe.